

JUL 08 2009

10/804,953

Remarks/Arguments

Claims 1-28, 31-36, 38-43, and 45-48 are pending in the application. Claims 29, 30, 37, and 44 are canceled. Claims 1-28, and 33-35 are allowed.

Claim 32 was withdrawn in the instant Office action on the basis that it is directed to an invention that is independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed. Applicant would like to respectfully point out that claim 32 depends from allowed claim 2. As a result, claim 32 is, at least, subject to rejoinder and in condition for allowance (*see, e.g.*, MPEP 821.04).

Claim 31 was rejected in the instant Office action under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicant regards as the invention. Applicant has amended claim 31 herein thereby addressing this rejection, and placing it in condition for allowance.

Claims 36-43, 45, 46 and 48 were rejected in the instant Office action under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,578,352 to Smith in view of U.S. Patent 4,884,826 to Slagsvol and U.S. Patent 2,170,147 to Lane. In addition, claims 44 and 47 were objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of limitations of the base and any intervening claims. Applicant has rewritten claim 36 to include all of the limitations of claim 44 and intervening claim 37, and amended claims 38-43, 45, 46, and 48 to depend from claim 36 (which now incorporates claim 37). Likewise, Applicant has rewritten claim 47 to include all of the limitations of the base (prior claim 36) and any intervening claims (claim 37). As a result, claims 36, 38-43, and 45-48 are also in condition for allowance.

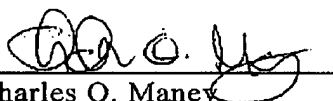
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Conclusions

In view of the foregoing, Applicant asks the Office to reconsider this application and allow all of the claims. Please apply any charges that might be due, excepting the issue fee but including fees for extensions of time, to deposit account 14-0225.

Respectfully,


Charles Q. Maney
Reg. No. 58,256

NCR Corporation
1700 South Patterson Blvd.
Dayton, Ohio 45479-0001

Tel. No. (937) 445-3849
Fax No. (937) 445-6794